

Testimony of

CHARLES SEEMAN, PRESIDENT/CEO
UNITED COMMUNITY AND FAMILY SERVICES, INC.

BEFORE
THE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE

REGARDING
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH
BUDGET PROPOSAL CONCERNING FEDERALLY QUALIFIED HEALTH CENTERS

March 2, 2011

Senator Harp, Representative Walker and distinguished members of the Appropriations Committee, I am Charles Seeman, President and CEO of United Community and Family Services, Inc., a Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC) Look-alike serving Eastern Connecticut. I am testifying in opposition to proposed cuts in the Department of Public Health budget that impact FQHCs in general, and Look-alikes in particular.

The State Budget proposed by Governor Malloy includes a 50-67% cut to the Department of Public Health FQHC grant for the **uninsured**. This is worth up to **\$172,300** annually for UCFS.

FQHCs in Connecticut are **not** all the same. UCFS is an FQHC **Look-like** – the only one in Connecticut. FQHC Look-alikes perform all the **same services** as FQHC Grantees, serve the same low-income publicly insured and uninsured population, but do not receive the same federal benefits as FQHC Grantees:

- Grantees receive annual **grants** of approximately \$650,000 each to offset the cost of serving the uninsured.
- Grantees receive federal (Federal Tort Claims Act) **FTCA** coverage, which pays for malpractice insurance for their providers.
 - Malpractice insurance costs UCFS \$150,000 per year.
- Grantees have access to **other** federal grants that Look-alikes cannot access:
 - Capital improvements
 - Service expansion
 - Equipment
- Look-alikes were not eligible for **ARRA** funding that came into the state between 2009-2010:



- The 13 Grantees in Connecticut received a total of \$8.9 million for operations, and \$28.2 million for facilities and equipment.

UCFS served 12,258 clients in FY 2010 – **similar** to FQHC Grantees in Norwalk and East Hartford. In FY 2009, **visits increased** by 13.5%; in FY 2010, visits increased by 12.5%; in FY 2011, we expect visits to increase by another 12.3%.

In addition to meeting this increased demand, UCFS opened a **Gynecology** practice in August, 2010, at a cost of \$350,000, in response to an urgent community need caused when a private practice serving 5,000 women, most on Medicaid, abruptly closed. The two Grantees in our area do not offer Gynecology.

UCFS has submitted a federal grant application to become a Grantee under the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (PPACA), but that **application** is currently in limbo due to federal budget concerns.

While we strongly oppose this cut on behalf of all FQHCs, we urge you to consider treating FQHC Look-alikes **differently** than Grantees when making state budget decisions, particularly those that affect our ability to provide direct care to our most vulnerable clients.

I thank you for your consideration.

